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THE POPULATION

161 The total population of Cherán in 1940 was about 5,000 as indicated by voting lists. Data from other censuses follow:

1900	4,395
1910	3,908
1920	3,552
1930	Not available

162 Information concerning the age composition of the Cherán population is limited. The only source of adequate information is provided by the voting lists for the 1940 election for two *barrios* and interviews. This information applies only to men of voting age. A summary of this information is given in table 10. The

TABLE 10.—*Age and occupational distribution of Cherán males*

Age and occupation and other classifications	Distribution of males in *barrio*—				
	I (partial)	II (partial)	III	IV	Total
Age group:					
18–30 (17–30 for *barrio* III)	29	16	62	86	193
31–40	34	13	85	35	157
41–50	17	15	62	62	146
51–60	15	10	27	18	70
61–70	7	13	26	15	60
71–80	7	0	0	0	7
Age not listed	2	6	5	1	14
Total	101	73	267	227	647
[212] Unmarried	3	6	2	0	11
Able to read	25	40	51	29	145
Occupation:					
[463] Agriculturalist	73	47	124	63	307
Laborer	6	5	119	133	265
Merchant (traders and storekeepers)	10	5	7	1	23
Hatmaker		2		1	3
Mason	1		3	2	6
Carpenter	2	2	3	3	10
Barber	1	2			3
Musician	1	1	2		4
Maestro	1				1
Shoemaker		1	6	1	8
Tilemaker			1		1
Various or none given	4	7	3	3	16

data on ages is probably more reliable than that from most primitive groups but still is not completely accurate. An analysis of the original data shows that a very great majority of the ages given end in "0" or "5," clearly indicating that they are guesses. Interviews showed the presence of a tendency to increase the ages of young men, and a decrease in the ages of elderly men is suspected.

162 217 Additional incomplete but interesting data on the population are provided by the study of

[633] evangelist of the Tarascans, was much influenced by Sir Thomas More's Utopia. The Utopian cities were divided into four divisions which served administrative purposes (Zavala, 1937; More, 1923, p. 54).

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608 The *compadres* both have the duty of visiting one another when one of them is sick or has encountered some difficulty and, if it is possible, help him in some form. When one of the *compadres* has a duty (that is, a wedding, funeral, *mayordomía*, house roofing, house moving, or fiesta duty), it is the duty of the other to accompany him as many days as may be necessary. (The same mutual obligation exists between godparents and godchildren.)

When a godson kidnaps a girl with intention of marrying her, it is the duty of the father of the youth, before all else, to go to the house of the godfather of the youth, that is his (the father's) *compadre* and give him the news so that they may present themselves together in the house of the bride. This is a duty of the godfather. This duty (the father) has toward the three godfathers, of baptism, confirmation, and crown.

The duties of the marriage *compadres* are limited solely to accompanying each other when one has some obligation (such as wedding, *mayordomía*, etc.), the moving or termination of a house, and the duty of saluting each other with the name of "*compadre*."

Method of selecting *compadres*. In selecting the *compadres* some of the following characteristics are taken into consideration:

1. When a family wishes to have *compadres*, in general if it is rich it endeavors to find *compadres* in the same category.

2. If the family is poor, it tries to have a *compadre* in its same category, as it has been seen that sometimes when a poor person seeks a rich man as *compadre*, the latter accepts but afterwards he is ashamed to say "*compadre*" to the other who is somewhat poor. For this reason the latter (rich *compadres*) are not common.

3. Many times they (the parents) try to find a *compadre* who knows how to read. They say this is [212] with the object that the infant will also be intelligent and know how to read. This is a belief among many, but it is not universal.

4. On other occasions efforts are made to find a *compadre* who is distinguished as a valiant person, in the sense of having bravery or, better, to be bold to fight when occasion offers—this, in general, indicates what among us is meant when a person is called "valiant"—with the object that the child will grow up and may be equally valiant as his godfather.

5. There are also cases in which a godfather is selected because he has done a favor on some past occasion or because of hope to receive some favor in the future. In general, this is the method of selecting a godfather. All usually try to find their *compadre* in an equal (social) category with these exceptions already noted.

608 The marriage *compadres:* In order to recognize one
585 another as *compadres* of marriage, it is necessary to perform a certain act or ceremony in the moments when the last act of the marriage is about to terminate. This act takes place in the house or the kitchen (usually the latter) of the bridegroom. Present are the t'árepiti diosv tandari (marriage manager), the parents

632 Persons who are shocked at the procedures
662 at Cherán should seriously contemplate the
666 difficulties in carrying out a formal election
212 with written ballots with a population which is very largely illiterate. In this case economic limitations and lack of imagination prevented carrying out the system used in national elections where the candidates each select a color and separate ballots are printed in the different colors. The voter then asks for his ballot by color and drops it into the ballot box. Not secret, and lending itself to ballot box stuffing, the method is at least an attempt to deal with the problem of an illiterate electorate. In a town such as Cherán the method followed in the election described seems equally efficacious—as long as the officials are responsive to public opinion.

632 That unconventionalities are frequent in elec-
665 tions is further illustrated by the presidential
666 elections earlier in the same year. Many months before the election a group of Almazán followers organized and began an active campaign in the town. The followers of Camacho (the PRM group) remained inactive. At the end of 2 or 3 months a PRM delegation waited on the Almazán followers and pointed out that there had been no interference with their campaign but that nevertheless the bulk of the town favored Camacho. The facts were apparently indisputable, and when the PRM group stressed the fact that further campaigning could only result in creating divisions and dissensions in the town, the Almazán group ceased its campaign. At the election, Cherán cast a unanimous ballot for Camacho.

185 Two things of interest emerge from this
666 account. The first is the power of the argument against disunity in the community. Particularly in the Indian community, unity is prized almost above all else. Sophisticated in some ways as Cherán is, this argument is still one of the most potent that can be made. The second point of interest is the bearing this sequence of events has on interpretation of the national election returns in Mexico. What happened in Cherán probably happened in hundreds of other towns in Mexico and helps partly to explain the one-sided results usually reported in Mexican elections.